

THE EARLY BUSHNELLS.

By WILLIAM T. R. MARVIN, A.M., of Boston, Mass.

THE accounts of the early Bushnells are not easily to be reconciled; we find them in Savage, Drake (Founders of New England), Hinman, and in Dr. Chesebrough's recent Address at the 250th Anniversary of the First Church at Saybrook, Ct. Savage mentions first, a Francis Bushnell, who was at Guilford in 1639 and died in 1646; he had a son Francis, born in England in 1600, who was at Guilford, Ct., and later at Saybrook, and died 4 Dec., 1681 (Savage and gravestone), and was known as "Deacon Francis." He mentions third, a carpenter, Francis, who, as appears by the Custom House Record, came in the Planter in 1635, aged 26, with wife Marie and daughter Martha; the wife's age was the same as her husband's, and the child was a year old. This third Francis, Savage supposes, was at Salem in 1639, "but if he were, he removed soon to parts unknown, unless he be found at Norwalk, Ct., in 1672." But his age, if correctly given on the Custom House Record, shows he cannot be the one at Norwalk in 1672, for he married Hannah Seymour, who was twenty years or more younger than the child above named; his age shows also that he cannot be the "Deacon Francis" of Saybrook who, as was shown above, was born in 1600. Dea. Francis was also a carpenter, and while some authorities make him, as does Savage, the son of Francis of Guilford, others make him a nephew of that Francis, and the son of John, and the brother of John of Saybrook; but I think he is clearly too old to be a son of John. Concerning the latter John, Savage says he was the son of a John whose residence is unknown; but Hinman states that the Saybrook records show the Saybrook John was the son of John of Boston.

Hinman has a Francis of *Guilford*, born in 1609, which agrees with the age of the carpenter Francis (as given by Savage and Drake), who came in the Planter. Clearly this cannot be the "Dea. Francis," born in 1600, and Hinman does not agree with himself in other accounts of this family, for he says (p. 444) that Samuel Bushnell, son of Francis, married Ruth Sanford in 1684, with which Savage (who calls Samuel a son of a Francis who may or may not be the second Francis he names, to whom he gives a son Samuel), agrees, and gives the date of marriage as 17 April, 1684; Ruth was born in 1659; but on p. 446 Hinman says Ruth married *William Bushnell*. I think, therefore, we may disregard Hinman.

Chesebrough says, John of *Saybrook* was son of John, whether following Hinman or not I do not know: and states that he had five or more brothers, but Francis, William and Richard are all the brothers of John he names, so far as I can discover. Of these Francis seems to have been the second son, and Richard the youngest. Richard went to *Saybrook* with William, who was born about 1623 and married *Rebecca Chapman*, of *Saybrook Point*, where his first child was born 6 May, 1644. He also was a carpenter, and built the first meeting-house in *Saybrook*. Richard married *Mary*, daughter of *Matthew Marvin*, and died about 1657.

Savage thinks William probably the brother of John of *Salem* and *Boston*, and that this John was the glazier who came in the *Hopewell* in 1635 (see Drake, p. 19); but neither the *Saybrook* John nor his father can be the glazier of *Boston*, for that John had children whose births are recorded in *Boston*, from 1652 onward, and among them a John, born 19 Jan. 1660 (Savage, *Errata* in Vol. III., p. 608).

Considering the age of the second Francis above, who died in 1681, and the date of marriage of Samuel, 1684, three years after his father's (?) death at so great an age, we are led to suspect that Samuel, even if the youngest child, is a generation too late to be the son of "Dea. Francis," though it appears the latter had a son of that name. Nor can he be the son of Francis, son of William, for that Francis was born in 1650, married *Hannah Seymour*, grand-daughter of *Matthew Marvin*, and had no sons. Could he have been the son of William's brother Francis? William himself had a son Samuel, but he married *Patience Rudd*, in 1675, by whom he had eight children named by Savage.

We seem, therefore, to find (1) Francis of *Guilford*, who as he had a son born in 1600, must have been born in 1578, or earlier, and died in 1646. (2) Francis, son of the preceding, born in 1600, died 1681, who was of *Guilford* and *Saybrook*. (3) Francis, who came in the Planter, born in 1609, of whom we only know he had a wife *Mary* and daughter *Martha*. (4) Hinman's Francis, who seems to be confused by him with the preceding, if Savage's account is right. (5) Francis of *Saybrook*, called son of John by Chesebrough, said to be the second son,—if so, born perhaps about 1621; and (6) Francis, who married *Hannah Seymour*, and who we know was son of William and b. in 1650.

As to (5) we fix the date of his birth approximately by the fact that Richard, the youngest, was married in 1648: he must have been born as early as 1626; William, another brother whose first recorded son was born in 1644, must have been born as early as 1623; while still another brother, John, is said to have married *Sarah Scranton* of *Guilford* in 1665, and we have no particulars of the other sons to help us. It will be noticed that this last date is about twenty years later than the marriages of the other "brothers." If the other statements are correct, we should have expected

an earlier marriage for John,³ the brother of William and Richard, for he must have been their elder; I therefore believe that Sarah Scranton's husband was a son of John³ and nephew of Richard, etc., and this does not conflict with Chesebrough.

After considerable study, I am led to conjecture that the first John "of Boston" was an older son of the first Francis of Guilford, that Dea. Francis was his brother, and that Samuel who married Ruth Sanford was the grandson of John and great-grandson of the first Francis, by John's son Francis. And I have reached this conclusion, as it seems to be the only one which harmonizes the conflicting accounts. I shall be very glad to receive any information which will confirm or disprove this theory.

If my theory be true, the line would stand thus:

- I. FRANCIS³ BUSHNELL, b. 1576? in England: at Guilford, Ct., in 1639, and died in 1646. His children were:
 - II. (1) JOHN,² of Salem and Boston, b. in England about 1598? Did he go to Saybrook later?
 - (2) FRANCIS² (Deacon), b. in 1600: was of Guilford and later of Saybrook. He had a son Samuel³ and five daus. (Savage.)
- III. Children of John²:
 - (1) JOHN,³ b. about 1620; went to Saybrook and had? John⁴ who mar. Sarah Scranton.
 - (2) FRANCIS,³ b. 1621; had issue, of whom Samuel⁴ mar. Ruth Sanford.
 - (3) WILLIAM,³ b. 1623?; mar. Rebecca Chapman, and had issue, of whom Francis⁴ mar. Hannah Seymour, and Samuel⁴ mar. Patience Rudd.
 - (4) RICHARD,³ b. 1626?; mar. Mary, dau. of Matthew Marvin, had issue and d. 1657, and she mar. 2d, as his second wife, Thomas Adgate.
 - (5 and 6) Two others, according to Chesebrough, names unknown.

I shall be glad to have the errors in this pointed out, but it seems to harmonize the different accounts, though the order of births is conjectural.